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Statement by the NSTA President

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experience with physics at the college level all too often is one which involves extensive use of the calculus. As a result, physics becomes lost in elegant mathematical manipulations and too many students are driven away from physics because they equate physics with very demanding mathematics.

The high school and college teachers have many problems and can greatly help each other. Much must be done to destroy the traditional image of the college teacher as an ivory-tower individual totally unaware of the practical realities of the high school and of the high school teacher as being so immersed in pedagogy and how to teach that he has never learned what to teach. To this end, several recommendations are made, including: exchange of visits, a conscientious and deliberate effort to improve the preparation of high school teachers by local short-term workshops and seminars, conferences on common problems, and a willingness by the college teacher to welcome and respond to requests for help from his high school counterpart. Above all, there must be a mutual respect in which the high school and college teacher regard each other as professional partners in a continually educational process.

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Few people would doubt that advancements in science and technology have dominated the changes in this century, and likewise, few would doubt the need to equip the citizenry with an understanding of these changes. To achieve this understanding of science has always been a serious and exciting undertaking. It is, however, one that must be continued and extended beyond formal education if we are to cope with the more complex scientific and technological changes of the future.

As President of the National Science Teachers Association, I urge every science teacher to accept responsibility for adult education in science. Science cannot be put on a shelf and reserved for the use of scientists and science students. Scientific information must be carried beyond the classroom into the community, and our scientific studies must be expanded to include all teachers of all disciplines, and every citizen in every area.

Learning, however, is a mutual effort, and the responsibility for producing knowledgeable citizens rests ultimately with the citizens themselves. The effort of teachers who accept the responsibility for educating the public must be matched by citizens who want to be educated, who want to learn. The only prerequisite is an interest in learning about the possibilities—and risks—of the scientific developments that are transforming man's environment.

Scientific research produces daily modifications in human welfare, and the future promises to surpass every present expectation. Gaining the intellectual tools needed to understand this increasing complexity is the only logical step toward making sound decisions about the application of the experimental results.

Elizabeth A. Simendinger
NSTA President, 1968-69